

January 27, 2009

**Update for the Reporting of *Clostridium difficile* Rulemaking
Arizona Administrative Code (A.A.C.), Title 9, Chapter 6, Article 2, Table 3**

Arizona Revised Statutes (A.R.S.) § 36-136(H)(1) states that the Arizona Department of Health Services (Department) shall “define and prescribe reasonably necessary measures for detecting, reporting, preventing, and controlling communicable and preventable diseases.” One mechanism by which the Department implements A.R.S. § 36-136(H)(1) is by requiring clinical laboratories to report positive test results for disease-causing agents specified in 9 A.A.C. Chapter 6, Article 2, Table 3. For some agents, clinical laboratories are also required in Table 3 to submit a specimen for each positive test result.

Recently, a more virulent strain of the bacteria, *Clostridium difficile*, has been detected. This type of bacteria causes diarrhea, which may progress to colitis, sepsis, and death. The Department had initiated a time-limited requirement for clinical laboratories to report positive results for *Clostridium difficile* to the Department by adding *Clostridium difficile* to the list of reportable agents in Table 3. The rulemaking also required large-volume clinical laboratories to submit specimens positive for *Clostridium difficile* so the Department could determine if the specimen contains the more virulent strain of the bacteria.

Due to the [Governor’s Memorandum](#), Regulatory Review Plan, dated January 22, 2009, and published in the *Arizona Administrative Register*, 15 A.A.R. 4, page 241, all action on this rulemaking has been suspended until after April 30, 2009.

Please contact Ruthann Smejkal, Rules Analyst for the Department, by phone at 602-364-1230 or by e-mail at smejkar@azdhs.gov if you have any questions regarding this rulemaking project.